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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

DATE DISTR. 14 Sept. 1955

SUBJECT 1. Softening of the Regime
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Softening of the Regime

1. Since the East German uprising in summer 1953, the Bulgarian Government has tried to diminish the dissatisfaction of the population by noticeably softening its policies and changing many of the stricter laws. Some of the changes are the following:
 - a. Relatives of Bulgarian escapees are no longer punished.
 - b. Relatives of political prisoners are no longer deported, dismissed from their jobs, or have difficulty in obtaining new jobs. A law was passed to equalize the status of these persons with that of other citizens and to allow them to change their place of residence under the same conditions as other citizens.
 - c. The law which prohibited a change of employment was abolished.
 - d. Many political prisoners were released.
 - e. Deportations have ceased.
- The primary complaints of the Bulgarian citizen were dissatisfaction with the low standard of living, lack of freedom, economic losses and confusion caused by incompetent Party economists, the enormous drain on the country's economy to maintain a large military and Party apparatus, and the fact that favored groups earned double the salary earned by the more competent non-Party groups.

Resistance Potential

- A large percentage of the population opposed to the present regime in Bulgaria included many organized Communists who realized that the present

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regime could do nothing good for their country. However, any opposition or dissatisfaction was more passive than active because any sign of organized resistance was quickly uncovered and the persons involved were mercilessly punished. [redacted] no organized clandestine or overt resistance groups but [redacted] possible that some existed because there was a desire to oppose the regime. Further, that a war would strengthen this desire if the West did something to encourage the population. In case of war, [redacted] the majority of the population would turn against the regime to aid liberating armies; however, in time of peace, a mass uprising would not be successful.

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